



**February 20, 2020**

## **Recreational Fires, Fire Pits and Chimineas**

Fire pits have become popular in recent years. At single family dwellings, special permits are not required in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts for the use of outdoor fire pits/fireplaces and chimineas, or cooking and recreational fires. However, effective January 1, 2015, several requirements went into effect based on Department of Environmental regulations and the Massachusetts State Fire Laws and Codes (MGL Chapter 148 and 527 CMR).

1. If cooking or recreational fires are taking place on public property or property not owned by the permit applicant, the applicants must demonstrate that they have permission from the owners.
2. The fire must be small and manageable, no greater than 3 feet in diameter. By definition, a fire larger than 3 feet in diameter and/or 2 feet in height is no longer considered a cooking or recreational fire (sec. 3.3.77 and sec. 3.3.215).
3. All fires must be constantly attended by a competent person (sec. 10, 11.5, 1).
4. A garden hose connected to a water supply or other fire extinguishing equipment shall be readily available for use (sec. 10.11, 5.2).
5. Fires shall not be conducted within 25 feet of a structure or combustible materials (sec. 10.11.4.3).
6. Conditions that could cause a fire to spread to within 25 feet of a structure shall be eliminated prior to ignition (sec, 10.11.4.4).
7. Outdoor fire pits/fireplaces, chimineas, cooking and recreational fires are not incinerators. The burning of trash, rubbish, painted/stained wood, and construction debris is prohibited (sec. 10.11.3.2 and 310 CMR 7.07 and 7.08).
8. Do not cause a nuisance or health hazard to your neighbors. Never use wet or damp wood. This may create needless irritating smoke. Always use dry seasoned wood, charcoal, or specialist fuel (e.g., wood burning briquettes). If the Norwell Fire Department receives complaints from neighbors that the smoke or smell is bothersome, we will investigate. If deemed necessary, you may be instructed to extinguish the fire (MGL 148 sec 5 & 527 CMR 1 sec. 10.11.2).
9. BE SAFE! Never use accelerants to light any fires.
10. For other than a single-family dwelling, no hibachi, grill, or other similar open flame devices used for cooking, heating, or any other purpose shall be used on any balcony, under any overhanging portion, or within 10 feet of any structure.